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ABSTRACT

Profiles are presented of programs effective in delivering special education services to students in rural areas. Projects are reviewed in terms of title, contact, strategy setting (occupations, income, special education staff, number of special education students), problem, strategy description, potential users, population affected, special requirements, cost analysis/funding requirements, and limitations. Profiles are organized according to the following topics: preschool, secondary, child find, recruitment and retention, mainstreaming, vocational education, inservice, transportation, parental involvement, grading procedures for handicapped children, dissemination of special education procedures, and support staff. (CL)

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# EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES APPROPRIATE FOR SPECIFIC RURAL SUBCULTURES

## SAMPLE PROFILES DEVELOPED BY THE NATIONAL RURAL RESEARCH AND PERSONNEL PREPARATION PROJECT (NRP)

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# EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES APPROPRIATE FOR SPECIFIC RURAL SUBCULTURES - SAMPLE PROFILES

Developed by:
The National Rural Research & Personnel Preparation Project (NRP)
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Title: Pre-School Handicapped Program

Contact:

Strategy Setting: Southwest Tennessee; valley of Cumberland Mountainous plateau, north of Chattanooga; mountainous terrain
Occupations: Small farms, coal mining, garment workers, and unskilled labor
Income: Low income; non-transient population
Special education staff: 13
Number of special education students: 274 (including speech handicapped)

Problem: This school district wanted to provide additional services of early intervention to their pre-school handicapped population.

Strategy Description: This pre-school special education program serves children who have significant delays in the following areas: (1) language development, (2) cognitive development, (3) fine and gross motor skills, (4) articulation, and (5) social adaptation skills. The eligible children are from 0 to 6 years old. The program includes a home-based activity program and a center-based program.

The following services are provided by the program:

(1) a direct early intervention program in the home providing one-to-one remediation and parent training;

(2) a half to full-day center-based program for 3 through 6-year-old children emphasizing socialization skills, appropriate nutritional programming, sequential language and cognitive development, and self-care skills;

(3) a complete assessment by a certified school psychologist with referral and transportation to other assessment agencies outside the county;

(4) preparation and implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs);

(5) monthly meetings for parents of pre-school handicapped children with appropriate guest speakers;

(6) the implementation of a follow-through system between pre-school personnel and regular public school personnel to enhance the adjustment of the children within the regular school program.

The personnel for the program include a program coordinator, a teacher, and two home-visitors/classroom aides. A total of 32 children are served by the program: 13 center-based and 19 home-based. Parent volunteers also come to the center to work with their children on their IEPs approximately once each week). In the summer months, booklets containing activities that parents can implement at home are prepared for each child.

Potential Users: Regular and special education administrators, special education pre-school personnel

Population Affected: Pre-school handicapped children and their parents

Special Requirements: Additional funding for staff, materials, etc. is required as are personnel trained to work with pre-school handicapped children. A handicapped child identification process for pre-school ages and parent involvement in the program is also essential.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: Funding for the program is provided through the state EHA-B monies (pre-school incentive grant). Aides are provided through CETA funds.

Limitations: This type of program is generally funded through a grant with additional support from the school district. A qualified program coordinator may be difficult to find.

Title: A Secondary Resource Room for Vocational Education and Work/Study

Contact:

Strategy Setting: West central Arkansas; rolling hills, wooded countryside
Average income: $6,000-8,000
Major industries: Farming, timber, brick making, aluminum production
Total school population: 5,200
Number special education students: 240 (not including speech-impaired)

Problem: Handicapped students need appropriate vocational training that is at their level of functioning.

Strategy Description: In the high school a resource room has been implemented in which students spend one to three hours daily working on basic academic skills (reading, math, etc.), daily living skills (time, money, community services, etc.), and prevocational/vocational skills (interviewing, taxes, making change, etc.). The program involves individualized instruction in all areas for each student and includes work/study type job placements. A vocational rehabilitation counselor from the state rehabilitation services department (at no cost to the school) visits the program once a week to individually counsel students about job placements, and to arrange work/study placements and transportation to job sites. The teachers, with consultation from the vocational rehabilitation counselor, decide which students are to be placed in the various settings. Placements for less able students are within the school cafeteria, library, office, custodial services, etc. More able students are placed in the community in jobs such as retail stores and restaurants. (These sites are contacted by the vocational rehabilitation counselor.) Students are paid for their services by employers in outside placements and by the school in in-service placements.

Potential Users: Secondary special education personnel

Population Affected: Secondary mildly handicapped students

Special Requirements: Job placement sites and the services of the vocational rehabilitation counselor who identifies placement sites are needed for this program.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: Part of the program is funded through the Vocational Rehabilitation Act. Costs include the resource teacher's salary, materials, and a small amount for remuneration for services rendered as part of the in-school placement sites by the students.

Limitations: Community placement sites may be difficult to arrange and coordinate without good contacts. It may be difficult in some rural areas to obtain frequent involvement of vocational rehabilitation counselors with the program.

Title: An Alternative Program for Secondary School Students with Severe Behavior Disorders

Contact:

Strategy Setting: Northeastern Minnesota; wooded farmland
Major occupations: Wood products and farming
Available industry: Paper mill
Total number special education students: Data not available
Total number special education staff: 13
Economics of residents: Average income $9,000
Major ethnic group: Caucasian

Problems: In the school districts served by the Tri-County Cooperative Center, a population of secondary youth with severe behavior problems significant enough to justify individual district programs did not exist.

Strategy Description: Using a model viable in other rural Minnesota areas, the Cooperative, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Human Resources provided the funding to adapt and develop a program to meet the educational needs of secondary youth with severe behavior problems. Support from administrators was easy to obtain because the program was directed at those students who were the "biggest problems" in their respective schools.

Housed in the administration building of one school district, the program is staffed by two Severe Learning Behavior Problem (SLBP) teachers, two case managers, one social worker, and an aide. These individuals, along with parents and staff from the student's home school, constitute the admissions committee. A contractual agreement between the student and his family and the alternative school staff is signed.

The goal of the alternative classroom is to prepare the student to return to his/her school with appropriate social and academic behavior. Teachers utilize "goal attainment scaling" to identify short-term objectives and to monitor weekly progress toward their attainment. This is a cyclic process of identifying with the student "where he is (academics/behaviors), where he wants to go (long division/reduce fighting) and how he is going to get there."

Contact is closely maintained with the parents, the child's neighborhood, and any special and judicial agencies involved with the child and his family. This is the primary responsibility of the case worker and the social worker.

The average length of participation in the program is between three and six months. After the student re-enters his/her home school, the case worker continues to monitor the progress of the student both in the school and in the home.

The Tri-County Cooperative staff reports that the classroom is viewed as a success for the students as well as their home schools. Enrollment in the program is viewed as a final alternative prior to expulsion or home bound placement. The prospects of these latter placement alternatives, should the student fail within the alternative classroom, have been directly correlated with the extensive success of the classroom.

Potential Users: Superintendents; principals; educational coordinators

Population Affected: Secondary-aged students with severe behavior disorders

Cost Analysis: No specific data are available regarding per pupil expenditure. Funding sources: State special education funds, Department of Corrections, Department of Human Services

Limitations: The financial support of this particular program was contingent upon the ability to establish a cooperative effort among several agencies providing educational services to the same group of children. Replication of the program would require staff well trained in educating secondary education students with severe behavior disorders.

Title: Child Find Strategies: Mailouts with Bank Statements

Contact:

Strategy Setting: West-central Arkansas; rolling hills, wooded countryside
Average income: $6,000-$8,000
Major industries: Farming, timber, brick-making, aluminum production
Total number school population: 5,200
Total number special education students: 240 (not including speech-impaired)

Problem: Child find strategies are difficult to implement in rural, isolated school districts.

Strategy Description: In addition to using the more common child find strategies (radio, newspaper, etc.), this rural school district implemented an innovative strategy. Child find brochures printed by the State Department of Arkansas were mailed with bank statements. This was initiated by the parent advisory council of the school district, and all contacts were handled through parents familiar with the bank staff. The strategy was effective in making citizens aware of the special education services.

Potential Users: Any school district

Population Affected: Handicapped children and the community-at-large

Special Requirements: A person with good public relation skills to make contacts is needed.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: None. Child find brochures were provided by the state.

Limitations: Some banks may not be willing to participate in such a process. The right approach, however, by a spokesman for special education can probably convince bank personnel of civic responsibility and the opportunity for community service.

Title: State Child Find Project

Contact:

Strategy Setting: State of Arkansas; very rural; school districts economically depressed cover vast land areas; limited services

Problem: It is difficult for rural districts to conduct effective child find strategies because of inadequate funding and other resources.

Strategy Setting: To implement successful child find strategies, the state of Arkansas has developed a child find project with full time staff. The goals of the project are to locate and identify handicapped children, inform parents of services provided, arrange for free evaluations, provide local districts with child find data for planning purposes, and maintain a data base of services provided to all handicapped children. Awareness activities include statewide television, radio, newspaper, and magazine announcements and literature distribution. Information and referral services are available via a toll free WATS line.

Other services are provided by the project. A mobile diagnostic team composed of an educational examiner, psychological examiner and speech pathologist has been established. Services provided include emergency student evaluations, in-service training, and organization and evaluation of district screening procedures. A psychologist conducts emergency evaluations, consultation, and inservice primarily in the area of severe emotional disturbance. A computerized data service is also available to local districts at no cost. This data bank stores student information, such as referral status, placement information, and re-evaluation needs. There is also a toll free telephone number that parents, surrogates, teachers, etc. may use to insure that handicapped children are receiving appropriate services.

Potential Users: State Departments of Education

Population Affected: General

Special Requirements: Funding and expertise in child find methodologies.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: The approximate total project cost for one year including the data system is $300,000.

Limitations: Adequate funding is a limitation. Local districts must still supplement the state program with their own child find strategies.

Title: Recruitment and Retention: Certification of Diagnostic Personnel

Contact:

Strategy Setting: State of Arkansas; very rural; school districts economically depressed cover vast land areas

Problem: In rural states, the recruitment of psychological personnel is a problem. Adequate funding is one contributing factor.

Strategy Description: In almost all states, particularly those in which school psychologists are required to do all testing, the recruitment of qualified diagnostic and evaluation personnel is difficult. Arkansas has developed preservice programs for the certification of special education personnel as educational examiners. This eliminates the difficulty of finding school psychologists and also provides an "educational" orientation for testing. This strategy has enabled local districts to meet the evaluation requirements in PL 94-142 and to serve the large case loads.

It should be noted that the certification requirements for the educational examiner have recently been upgraded and will go into effect soon. Requirements include one year of experience as a certified teacher and 45 hours of graduate level credit in the areas of educational foundations, principles of learning and teaching, human development, counseling skills, appraisal and programming skills, and supervised diagnostic experience.

Potential Users: Any state in which recruitment of school psychologists and psychometrists is a problem

Population Affected: General

Special Requirements: State certification laws for "educational examiner" or an equivalent position and preservice programs to meet needs of the state for that type of position are essential.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: State funding base for educational examiners is $2.00 for each child enrolled in district. This salary is supplemented by the local district.

Limitations: The modifications of certification standards for diagnostic personnel may better enable school districts to recruit such staff and to meet testing requirements. However, no data have been provided to make valid comparisons between the quality of services provided by the "educational examiner" and those of a psychologist or psychometrist.

**Title:** Recruitment and Retention of Support Personnel: Speech Therapists

**Contact:**

**Strategy Setting:** West-central Tennessee; south end of Kentucky Lake; low, swampy land surrounding Big Sandy River
Occupations: Small farms, garment factories, gravel and sand pits, several large industries (DuPont, Genesco, TVA, etc.)
Average income: $10,000
Population: Less than 3% black
School enrollment: Elementary, 2,000; secondary, 1,000
Special education staff: 10

**Problem:** Rural school districts have difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified support personnel, such as speech therapists.

**Strategy Description:** The district had been trying to recruit a speech therapist for several months. The School Board decided to implement a strategy of granting a tuition scholarship to any local bachelor's level teacher willing to obtain a master's degree in speech and hearing. No teacher agreed to do this; however, an aide who had two years of college agreed to get a bachelor's degree with certification in speech and hearing and elementary education. This person agreed to come back to the district to teach elementary education in the event the district was successful in recruiting a speech therapist in the intervening period. The district paid full tuition for the aide to return to the university. Because the aide was a long-time resident of the community and unlikely to move away from the district after serving a short time, the strategy had dual advantages.

Other related strategies used to recruit support personnel include assistance in locating housing for new personnel, money for relocation, and help in settling in the community. A retention strategy utilized for support personnel is a $1,000 bonus for signing a contract for the second year of service.

These strategies have been successful in recruiting and retaining qualified support personnel in the Camden, Tennessee area.

**Potential Users:** Regular and special education administrators.

**Population Affected:** Support personnel, services to handicapped students

Special Requirements: Information on recruitment and retention incentives must be disseminated to staff through effective media (i.e., brochures, district memos, etc.).

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: Cost of two years of university tuition. Small relocation amount; $1,000 bonus for second year contract.

Limitations: Additional funding may not be available for some of these provisions/incentives in many small rural districts. Monies spent, however, to retain good personnel and to promote program continuity may prove more economical over several years than expenditures related to annual recruitment.

Title: Principal Intervention in Mainstreaming a TMH Student at the Elementary Level

Contact:

Strategy Setting: North-central Arizona; timber country
Major occupations: Logging, ranching, tourism
Industry available: Housing
Total number special education students: 75
Total number special education staff: 5 teachers, 6 part-time ancillary
Economics of residents: Average income is somewhat below the national average
Major ethnic group: Caucasian

Problem: The elementary school principal faced the problem of preparing the staff and students for a newly entering TMH student. In prior years, TMH and other low-incidence handicapped students had not received educational services in the local school district.

Strategy Description: The principal used two strategies to approach the problem. First, he and the resource teacher held staff inservices on an informal basis to develop reasonable expectations concerning the newly entering student's strengths and weaknesses. They also reviewed the staff's responsibilities under PL 94-142.

The principal then visited each receiving classroom with the aim of preparing the students for the handicapped student. In an informal presentation, he emphasized the importance of expecting the same level of social conduct from the new student as for any other student and the importance of providing appropriate peer models.

The occurrence of an inappropriate social behavior which was indirectly reinforced by classmates necessitated another visit by the principal. There was a detailed discussion of the incident and an explanation of the students' contributions to reoccurrence of the behavior. The principal indicated how the students, using general behavior management principles, could handle this and other situations.

Potential Users: Principals; superintendents; special education teacher; regular class teacher

Population Affected: Elementary TMH students; elementary regular classroom students; elementary education staff; elementary principal

Special Requirements: Knowledge of behavior management principles and skills required to communicate effectively to staff and students. Administrator interested in integration of TMH student into regular education classrooms.

Cost Analysis: No costs incurred

Limitations: Students and staff willing to assist the principal in integrating low-incidence handicapped students may not always be present. However, time taken to explain and to prepare staff and students contributes to understanding which usually facilitates acceptance.

Title: Vocational Education for Special Education Students Living in a Remote Rural Area

Contact:

Strategy Setting: Northeast Arizona, Fort Apache Reservation. Rugged mountainous area
Major Occupation: Unskilled labor
Industry Available: Sawmill, cattle ranching, recreation
Total Number Special Education Students: 114
Total Number Special Education Staff: 13 teachers, 3 teaching aides, 12 ancillary personnel
Economics of Residents: Ranging from extreme poverty to high salaried tribal government positions
Major Ethnic Group: Apache

Problem: An identified need was the preparation of the handicapped for employment in an occupation or a cluster of occupations compatible with their abilities. This was particularly evident on the White Mountain Apache Indian Reservation where handicapped individuals are socially and vocationally alienated.

Strategy Description: One of Alchesay High School's regular programs is vocational training. Located on the White Mountain Apache Indian Reservation, this particular program is affiliated with a computer dissemination center located at Ohio State University and is considered by (OSE) to be a model program. Entry into the program begins with acquisition of parent permission.

Once permission has been obtained, the student is administered diagnostic and vocational assessments. Each student is assessed to determine physical tolerance, reading levels, math levels, fine and gross motor skills, ability to follow instructions, frustration tolerance, attentiveness to task and communication skills. As these are determined, an individual vocational education plan (IVEP) is developed. Depending upon assessment data, the student will complete the course objectives for severely impaired or he/she will enter at the level for those who have mild/moderate mental or physical disabilities and participate in resource classes for special assistance. Each student must also attend a 50-minute class with the Vocational Evaluator daily.

This class covers such areas as the completion of job applications, awareness of local jobs and entry level criteria, consumer education (how to shop by catalogue) and appropriate work behavior. Work experience (local part-time employment) task-requirements are coordinated with assessment data and classroom orientation. The actual work experience may be with the Department of Transportation, the local shopping center,

sawmill, forestry service, tribal operations, or recreation operation. CETA and Johnson O'Malley funds are used as incentive pay during this portion of the program. The salary meets the current minimum wage of $2.90/hr. Transportation to and from the job site is provided by a district school bus.

To make a smooth transition between the classroom and the field placement, the program staff provides continual counseling services to the student and/or his/her employer. Amelioration of adjustment difficulties (i.e., task behavior) is managed on a crisis basis.

Student progress is evaluated on a nine-week and a semester basis using the VALPAR work sample component system. Behavioral data maintained by the vocational teacher monitor academic and adaptive behavior within the resource and regular classrooms.

Potential Users: Superintendents; special education coordinators; special education teachers/secondary level; vocational education teachers

Population Affected: Secondary education handicapped reservation students; community businesses; special and regular education teachers

Special Requirements: A community offering a variety of potential work experiences is needed. A teacher with minimal competencies in vocational education and a knowledge of the learning characteristics of exceptional populations is also essential.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: Funding sources: -CETA, Johnson O'Malley, district vocational evaluator salary, Title IV-C

Limitations: Without an initial job opportunity needs assessment and a knowledge of the availability of types and numbers of community jobs, the vocational evaluator may experience difficulty in securing/assuring a graduate's entry into the work force.

Title: A Sequenced Vocational Education Program for Secondary Handicapped Students

Contact:

Strategy Setting: Southwest Tennessee; valley of Cumberland Mountains plateau, north of Chattanooga; mountainous terrain
Occupations: Small farms, coal mining, garment factories, and unskilled labor
Income: Low income area; non-transient population
Special education staff: 13
Number of special education students: 274 (including speech handicapped)

Problem: In rural school districts, diversified vocational training is frequently a problem for secondary handicapped students because of the lack of appropriate programming and work placements.

Strategy Description: The school district developed a sequenced vocational education program that is appropriate for mildly handicapped students. There are two basic program components: (1) the Vocational Advancement Program (VAP) and (2) the Vocational Improvement Program (VIP). The VAP provides a basic, pre-vocational program for 9th grade handicapped students. This program provides instruction in self-care skills, social skills, health and safety skills, and use of community agencies. Other pre-vocational skills taught are attendance, promptness, task completion following oral and written directions, and completion of work related forms. Students are also involved in work experiences such as janitorial work, food services, housekeeping, yard maintenance, simple construction, crafts, and leisure time activities. Students rotate among these experiences.

The students continually examine many job clusters with the assistance of the high school vocational job counselor. At the end of the year, the students select the vocational areas in which they would like to receive training for the remainder of their high school years. Students whose functioning level does not allow them to study in a vocational area remain in the VAP class and receive continued intensive instruction in the area of choice and aptitude.

The VIP classes provide instruction for students completing the VAP; they, too, serve handicapped and low-achieving students. The program emphasizes vocational subjects and/or subjects needed to graduate. This includes four years of special English (focusing on job-related reading and writing), two years of special math, a year of special American history, and economics if necessary. Two teachers and one aide provide instruction in the VIP program.

Mildly handicapped secondary students are encouraged to take regular classes if appropriate. Their progress is monitored closely with tutoring, and class changes are provided if necessary.

The students, teachers, and administration have positively assessed the development of the sequenced program.

Potential Users: Regular and special education administrators, secondary special education personnel

Population Affected: Secondary mildly handicapped students

Special Requirements: Secondary special education teachers trained in pre-vocational and vocational areas and in-school work placements are needed for this program.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: The program is partially funded through EHA-B monies from the state. Salaries must be provided for the two special education teachers and the aide.

Limitations: None

Title: Special Education Facility Adaptation by Secondary Handicapped Students

Contact:

Strategy Setting: Southwest Arkansas; small, rural district in low-lying farmland
Average income: Forty percent of population have incomes below poverty level
Total school enrollment: 630
Number special education students: 76
Number special education staff: 6
Major ethnic groups: 60% of the local population is black

Problem: Additional classroom space was needed for an expanding special education program. It was available in an old school building, but modifications were needed before it could be utilized.

Strategy Description: Extra storage and extra classroom space with needed orientation/mobility modifications were secured through the renovation of an old building. The industrial arts teacher, assisted by the older special students at the secondary level, completed the renovation of the old building. This gave the secondary handicapped students valuable vocational experience in a real setting.

Potential Users: Secondary administration and special education staff

Population Affected: All special students, particularly high school age

Special Requirements: Materials to make necessary facility adjustments and/or adaptations

Cost Analysis/Funding: Cost of materials. Compensation for the industrial arts teachers time is needed if he must work an overload/outside school hours.

Limitations: The quality of work was lower than that of skilled craftsmen, but the sense of achievement by the students outweighed the need for a more professional renovation.

Title: Inservice for Regular Teachers in a District with Limited Resources: Master Teacher Approach

Contact:

Strategy Setting: East-central Nevada; high plateau and mountains; sparse population
Occupations: Mining and ranching; depressed economy
Major ethnic groups: Caucasian, Chicano, and Native American
Total number special education students: 350 (including speech handicapped)
Total number regular education staff: 90; no higher education resources within a reasonable distance

Problem: Special education inservice is needed for regular teachers to integrate handicapped children in their classes; however, the district lacks the resources to provide such training and it is difficult to share resources with other districts because the district covers a vast geographic area.

Strategy Description: For the implementation of PL 94-142, particularly in regard to educating handicapped children in the least restrictive environment, regular teachers need new and refined skills. The delivery of this training is difficult in rural areas in which the district lacks higher education opportunities and other resources to provide inservice.

The White Pine County School District utilized a "master teacher" approach to solve this inservice problem. The assistant special education supervisor (part-time resource teacher) received training through a project at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas (Project SPECTRE, Dr. Edward Kelly, Director). She received materials enabling her to offer for three hours of university credit a course entitled: "Teaching Special Children in the Regular Classroom." The inservice curriculum included topics such as characteristics of exceptional children, PL 94-142 and implications, assessment of exceptional children, classroom strategies (academic and behavior management), and working with parents. The project included a resource manual covering the above topics. Ten regular teachers from the White Pine County District participated in the summer course which was presented five days, five hours each day.

The course also had a practicum component for another three hours credit in the ensuing autumn. The practicum "focused upon teacher demonstrations of competence in content areas previously acquired through the August SPECTRE inservice." The participating teachers worked with handicapped students in their own classrooms. Materials were provided to the participants to enhance their work with specific handicapped children. The teachers were evaluated through completed case studies of the handicapped students in their rooms and through self and staff ratings of diagnostic and teaching competence. The practicum was supervised by project staff on a regularly scheduled basis (once every two weeks).

Potential Users: Special education administrators and supervisors; regular administrators; staff development directors

Population Affected: Regular teachers

Special Requirements: A cooperative agreement is needed between the school district and a university to train the "master teacher." The master teacher should be someone who is motivated and competent to train other teachers. This requires someone who is respected by regular teachers. Arrangements must be made if the course is to be offered for university credit. Materials for the participants must be supplied by the school districts or the university.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: This particular project was funded through the university. The cost could be negotiated among the university, school district, and the inservice participants. Inservice materials, university credits, and compensation for the "master teacher" appear to be the main cost factors.

Limitations: Coordination with a university is needed. Interest for the inservice must be developed with involvement of target teachers.

Title: Inservice: Preparation for Entry of Deaf Student (Sign Language Training)

Contact:

Strategy Setting: Southwest Tennessee; valley of Cumberland Mountains plateau, north of Chattanooga; mountainous terrain
Occupations: Small farms, coal mining, garment factories, and unskilled labor
Income: Low income area; non-transient population
Special education staff: 13
Special education students: 274 (including speech handicapped)

Problem: School systems that provide services for low incidence handicapped students (i.e., deaf children) within the district often do not have qualified personnel or support from regular personnel to properly educate these children.

Strategy Description: This rural school district planned to provide educational services for a deaf student. In preparation for the handicapped student's entry, an inservice program offering sign language training (manual communication) was initiated in the year preceding entry. A sign language teacher was contracted to teach a class twice a week for one hour in the late afternoon during planning periods. Attendance was compulsory for all special education teachers, aides, and support personnel. In addition, the regular teachers who were to have contact with the deaf child also attended the classes. The response of the participants to the inservice was very favorable. The child has moved into the school, and the teachers and aides are able to communicate with the student.

Potential Users: All school personnel providing services to hearing impaired/deaf students

Population Affected: School personnel and hearing impaired/deaf students

Special Requirements: Person qualified to teach manual communication

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: Fee for the sign language teacher. This inservice is funded in part through the Adult Basic Education Program.

Limitations: It may be difficult to find someone qualified to teach manual communication who is available to rural areas.

Title: Transportation for Severely Handicapped Children

Contact:

Strategy Setting: West-central Arkansas; rolling hills, wooded countryside
Average income: $6,000-8,000
Major industries: Farming, timber, brick-making, aluminum production
Total school population: 5,200
Total number special education students: 240 (not including speech-impaired)

Problem: Small rural school districts often do not have the resources to provide special transportation for severely handicapped children who are unable to ride regular school buses.

Strategy Description: Although the majority of handicapped students in this rural district ride the regular school bus (including a wheelchair student), there are two severely handicapped students who cannot ride the regular bus. Because it is the school's responsibility to transport such students, a strategy had to be implemented using school resources. The school did not have the funds to purchase a special bus for handicapped. Therefore, it was decided to utilize the bus drivers' personal cars. The drivers transport the severely handicapped students to school in their cars after completing their regular bus route each morning, and they take the students home before they drive their bus routes in the afternoon. This does slightly shorten the school day of the severely handicapped students. The drivers have a minimal amount of management difficulties with the students.

Potential Users: Regular and special education administrators

Population Affected: Severely handicapped students and school bus drivers

Special Requirements: Bus drivers must be willing to assume this extra duty. Insurance must cover transportation of such students in bus drivers' personal cars.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: Bus drivers receive extra pay for transporting the severely handicapped students.

Limitations: If the severely handicapped students are difficult to manage, the bus drivers may be reluctant to provide the service. However, students wanting to be at school with other children are more apt to be as cooperative as possible.

**Title:** Utilization of Senior Citizens' Mini-Bus for Transportation of Handicapped

**Contact:**

**Replicability:** Rural communities having a transportation service for senior citizens (or similar group)

**Strategy Setting:** Southwest Tennessee; valley of Cumberland Mountains plateau, north of Chattanooga; mountainous terrain
Occupations: Small farms, coal mining, garment factories, and unskilled labor
Income: Low income area; non-transient population
Special education staff: 13
Special education students: 274 (including speech handicapped)

**Problem:** Rural school districts often have neither the resources nor the funding to provide special transportation (other than regular bus routes) for severely handicapped students.

**Strategy Description:** The rural district contracted with the local senior citizens' organization to use their mini-bus to transport severely handicapped students unable to ride the regular bus. The driver of the mini-bus is the usual senior citizens' driver.

**Potential Users:** Regular and special education administrators, transportation directors

**Population Affected:** Severely handicapped children

**Special Requirements:** None

**Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements:** The contract and cost are based on the mileage, gas, and driver's salary.

**Limitations:** Scheduling must be made to coincide with the schedule established by the senior citizens' organization. This transportation strategy is probably most feasible for those handicapped students residing within a ten-mile radius of the school. Adequate insurance coverage must be provided for the scheduled use of the van to transport the students.

**Title:** Incentives to Encourage Parent Attendance at School-Based IEP Meetings

**Contact:**

**Strategy Setting:** Eastern Arizona; San Carlos Apache Reservation; high desert country
Major occupations: Tourism, ranching, high unemployment
Industry available: Mining
Total number special education students: 101
Total number special education staff: 7
Economics of residents: Primarily poverty, high unemployment; few of "high status" pay
Major ethnic group: Apache

**Problem:** Few parents attend the IEP placement or related school-based meetings. Contributing factors are lack of transportation, lack of babysitting services, and cultural differences.

**Strategy Description:** Recognizing the factors contributing to poor parental attendance, the district administration offered the following incentives: free transportation, babysitting services, and meals.

A liaison person contacted eligible parents to make them aware of the service. Meetings were planned so that meals were available at the school cafeteria.

Aides and parents were utilized to provide transportation and babysitting. Some were volunteer and others received the minimum wage.

Although the problem still exists, parental attendance has been increased via this strategy.

**Potential Users:** Superintendent; school board; PTA groups; special education coordinators; service cooperatives

**Population Affected:** Parents and special education teacher living on San Carlos Reservation

**Special Requirements:** Volunteers and transportation vehicles available

**Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements:** Funding source: Johnson-O'Malley. No cost breakdown was available. However, administrators indicated that the amount was minimal.

**Limitations:** Effectively enlisting Apache parents living in areas remote from the school remains a prime concern.

**Title:** Increasing Parent Participation by Including Students in Placement and IEP Meetings

**Contact:**

**Strategy Setting:** Northeast Arizona; Fort Apache Reservation; rugged mountainous area
Major occupation: Unskilled labor
Industry available: Saw mill, cattle ranching, recreation
Total number special education students: 114
Total number special education staff: 13 teachers, 3 teaching aides, 12 ancillary personnel
Economics of residents: Ranging from extreme poverty to high-salaried tribal government positions
Major ethnic groups: Apache

**Related Problems/Needs Area:** Parent attendance at school-based IEP meetings is often poor, and students seldom participate in IEP committee meetings.

**Strategy Description:** On one particular occasion, a junior high student asked to attend the IEP meeting as an observer. The special education coordinator complied with the request and was surprised that the student's parents also came and willingly participated in the meeting.

Based on this observation, the coordinator established the policy that junior high and high school students should be routinely included in the IEP meetings. This technique increased parent attendance. Success was attributed to the fact that students in addition to teachers were requesting parent attendance.

An additional benefit was noted by the coordinator. Students attending the meetings informed their friends of the proceedings, and this communication reduced the perceived distance between special and regular education.

**Potential Users:** Teachers/special and regular; principals; educational coordinators

**Population Affected:** Junior and senior high special education students; parents; special education teachers

**Special Requirements:** Because the technique was discovered "after the fact," a sensitivity to potential unplanned benefits has been discerned as valuable.

**Cost:** None

**Limitations:** The major factor limiting the effectiveness of this technique is the willingness of educators to share the instructional process with students and their parents.

Title: Developing Parent Support Through Provision of Extraordinary Speech Services to Families

Contact:

Strategy Setting: Southwest Tennessee; valley of Cumberland Mountains plateau, north of Chattanooga; mountainous terrain
Occupations: Small farms, coal mining, garment factories, and unskilled labor
Income: Low income area; non-transient population
Special education staff: 13
Special education students: 274 (including speech handicapped)
Population: Caucasian and English speaking

Problem: Four Laotian families (non-English-speaking) moved into the school district. The children received special language instruction in the schools. However, the parents had difficulty adjusting to the community and communicating with the school because of their inability to speak English.

Strategy Description: A strategy was needed to obtain more parent support and involvement from non-English-speaking families as well as to help them adjust to the community. There were no private speech/language services available. The district school board opted to provide English lessons for the four non-English speaking families two evenings per week. The district's speech therapist, designated as an ESL (English-as-a-second-language) teacher, provided these services. The program provided a basis for communication, trust, and involvement with the families. All parties have been pleased with the results.

Potential Users: Regular special education administrators, speech/language therapists

Population Affected: Caucasian and English-speaking

Special Requirements: Speech/language therapist or teacher (i.e., English) willing to provide additional services at night, or other times convenient to parents. Facility for evening classes. Funding to pay therapist or teacher.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: Therapist or teacher salary. Each family received $220 from the Indo-Chinese Children's Fund (federal program) which was put in the training fund. The rest of the cost was absorbed through local district funds.

Limitations: None

Title: Parent Advisory Council for Special Education

Contact:

Strategy Setting: West-central Arkansas; rolling hills, wooded countryside
Average income: $6,000-8,000
Major industries: Farming, timber, brick-making, aluminum production
Total school population: 5,200
Number special education students: 240 (not including speech-impaired)

Related Problems/Needs Area: In isolated, rural districts there is often a lack of involvement by parents in the special education program in the local school district.

Strategy Description: Parental involvement was obtained in this rural school district by forming a parent advisory council. The special education supervisor with the assistance of special education teachers determined which parents in the district might be willing and capable of serving on the council. The supervisor then contacted parents individually by phone to see if they would volunteer. Five parents agreed to be on the committee which is also comprised of some of the special education staff including the special education supervisor. The supervisor directs the activities of the council. The council acts mainly on public relations issues, particularly child find activities. There is some advisement on the general operation of the special education section, although the council does not have input on actual program decisions.

An example of the council's activities was the implementation of a child find strategy in which brochures were mailed with bank statements. The parents initiated the idea and made all necessary contacts to implement it. The school administration has been pleased with the functioning of the parent advisory council.

Potential Users: Special education administrators, parents organizations

Population Affected: Parents of handicapped children and special education personnel

Special Requirements: None

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: None

Limitations: It may be difficult to obtain adequate parent participation in many rural districts.

**Title:** Maintaining Daily Communication Between Home and School

**Contact:**

**Strategy Setting:** Northwestern New Hampshire; hilly to mountainous terrain
Major occupations: Wood products and tourism
Available industry: Timber and wood products
Total number of special education students: 14 (served by consortium)
Total number of special education staff: 2 teachers, 2 aides, 8 ancillary
Economics of residents: Ranges from extreme wealth to poverty
Major ethnic groups: Caucasian; small percentage of French-Americans

**Problem:** Parents and teachers of a severely-impaired child seldom communicate on a daily basis. The teacher, making daily decisions in the classroom, may be unaware of events occurring at home that affect student behavior (sleep disturbances, medication changes, etc.) Likewise, the parents may lack knowledge about the daily growth of their child in the classroom.

**Strategy Description:** The White Mountain Consortium for Multi-handicapped Children is composed of two classrooms located in an elementary school. These classrooms represent a combined effort of three school districts. Because of the large geographic area served by the consortium, home-school communication could become a sporadic, non-functional process.

In order to address the need for good communication channels, the consortium has developed Communication Books. They are made from construction paper by the teacher and an aide. These are carried b the student between home and school on a daily basis. With this ki of vehicle, parents can share significant problems/growth in the ho with the teacher. To reciprocate, the teachers can communicate daily growth/problems/accidents with the parents.

The consortium coordinator reported that parents were enthusiastic even when the Communication Books were first implemented. This ent iasm has grown into a perception of the Communication Books as an integral part of the classroom and its success.

**Potential Users:** Regular and special education teachers; educational coordinators

**Population Affected:** Parents and teachers of children attending the White Mountain Consortium classrooms

**Special Requirements:** The only requirement is the time necessary to write daily in each communication book.

**Cost Analysis:** The cost is minimal and is covered by the classroom budget.

**Limitations:** Any limitations are specific to the attitudes of the parties replicating this strategy.

**Title:** One Approach to Bridging the Gap Between the LEA and Native American Families

**Contact:**

**Replicability:** The strategy is most successful in districts which are segmented racially.

**Strategy Setting:** Midwestern Minnesota; wooded farmland
Major occupations: Wood products and farming
Industry available: Paper mills
Total special education students: Data not available
Total special education staff: 13
Economics of residents: Average income $9,000
Major ethnic group: Caucasian

**Problem:** Many Native American families live within the cooperative service area. It is common for these families to be less than trusting of the schools and for the schools to be somewhat insensitive to the values and needs of these families.

**Strategy:** In order to facilitate the delivery of services to handicapped Native American children (K-12), the Tri-County Cooperative assisted the local districts in obtaining funding to hire resource persons. These resource persons are themselves Native Americans and are given the responsibility to develop and maintain good relationships with Indian families who have handicapped children requiring special services. The Indian resource persons established themselves as friends and trusted liaisons for the school.

Using home visits and telephone calls as primary vehicles of information dissemination, the Native American resource persons assist in the scheduling of school-based meetings and in making referrals for assessments and placements. They assist in the explanation to parents of services provided and due process procedures. They are also involved in the development of IEPs.

The cooperative director reports that the program has been successful both in terms of drawing Indian parents closer to the schools and in heightening the awareness of school staff regarding the culture and values of Native American families.

**Potential Users:** Superintendents; educational coordinators; districts with bilingual/bicultural populations

**Population Affected:** Native American children, their families, and the school staff

**Special Requirements:** Administrative support is essential

**Cost Analysis:** Funding sources: State special education funds and Indian education funds

**Limitations:** The success or failure of this liaison program will depend on the skills of the resource persons hired.

**Title:** Establishing Grading Procedures for Handicapped Children in Regular Classes

**Contact:**

**Strategy Setting:** East-central Nevada; high plateau and mountains; sparse population; district covers a vast geographic area
Occupations: Mining and ranching; depressed economy
Major ethnic groups: Caucasian, Chicano, and Native American
Total number special education students: 350 (including speech handicapped)
Total number special education staff: 11

**Problem:** Grading is a difficult problem for handicapped children in regular classrooms. If normal standards are maintained, many handicapped children are graded as failures regardless of their effort. If normal standards are relaxed, grades frequently become meaningless, and it is difficult to know how competent a child is.

**Strategy Description:** Grading problems for mainstreamed handicapped children were reduced in this school district by a combination of maintaining standards at the higher grade range but relaxing standards at the lower grade range. The county-wide grading policy is as follows:

> "When any special education student is given a letter grade on a report card or in a permanent record, the following system is to be used: A and B grades will be given only when student achieves using the same criteria used for regular students who get A and B grades. C grades indicate that the student is doing as well as can be expected regardless of the percentage of competency. (Thus a student could be getting 20% but still get a C if the teacher felt he was doing as well as he could). D and F grades will only be given if the student is not making efforts to do what he can."

This system seems to be satisfactory to all parties involved.

**Potential Users:** Regular and special education teachers

**Population Affected:** Handicapped children in regular classrooms

**Special Requirements:** None

**Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements:** None

**Limitations:** It is difficult to differentiate between those students who cannot accomplish a specific task and those who can, but do not expend appropriate efforts.

Title: Dissemination of Special Education Procedures to be used by Regular Teachers

Contact:

Strategy Setting:

East-central Nevada; high plateau and mountains; sparse population; district covers a vast geographic area
Occupations: Mining and ranching; depressed economy
Major ethnic groups: Caucasian, Chicano and Native American
Total number special education students: 350 (including speech handicapped)
Total number special education staff: 11
Total number regular education staff: 90

Problem:

A method of informing regular teachers about special education procedures was needed to assure better services to handicapped children and compliance with relevant federal and state laws.

Strategy Description:

In school districts in which schools are far distances from each other, communication about special education procedures and regulations is difficult. This is particularly true for regular teachers. Inservice training can help, but this knowledge is not necessarily maintained.

A special education handbook was developed and distributed to all regular teachers. The handbook, developed by the special education administrator and the assistant administrator, describes the local program in terms of the guidelines of PL 94-142 and state mandates. The handbook is in a question and answer format and covers questions that have been asked frequently by regular teachers. Topics covered in the handbook include: the role of the special education teacher, description of special education services, child find strategies, identification procedures, referral procedures (with sample forms), roles of the regular teacher in the evaluation process, development and review of IEPs (with sample IEP forms), placement procedures, annual review procedures, confidentiality policies, and parental and due process rights.

Suggestions are also given in the handbook to assist regular teachers in individualizing instruction for handicapped children. Examples of these suggestions include: reading students' tests aloud; time extensions for learning terms, etc., decreasing assignment loads; providing another student to read difficult texts; and obtaining multilevel materials. The response from the teachers to this handbook was favorable.

**Potential Users:** Regular and special education administrators, regular teachers

**Population Affected:** Regular teachers

**Special Requirements:** None

**Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements:** Cost of printing and duplication of the handbook

**Limitations:** None

Title: Utilization of an Aide to Extend Speech Therapy Services

Contact:

Strategy Setting: West-central Tennessee; located at south end of Kentucky Lake; low, swampy land surrounding Big Sandy River
Occupations: Small farms, garment factories, gravel and sand pits, several large industries (DuPont, Genesco, TVA, etc.)
Average income: $10,000
Population: Less than 3% black
School enrollment: Elementary, 2,000; secondary, 1,000
Special education staff: 10

Problem: Rural school districts have difficulty recruiting full-time support personnel, such as speech therapists. Several districts must often contract for services and share a therapist, thereby reducing the amount of service to each district.

Strategy Description: A certified speech therapist was contracted to provide speech services to the district for two days per week in addition to the services of another full-time speech therapist. However, this was not adequate to supply the services needed in the district. The problem was ameliorated by the employment of a full-time aide to assist in speech therapy. The aide observes and helps the therapist for the two days that the therapist is in the district. The aide then repeats the lesson plans and follows the therapist's instructions on those days the therapist is not in the district. This allows the aide to be trained in many techniques that can then be applied five days a week under the supervision of the certified speech therapist. The aide has been effective in expanding speech services and giving additional practice for the speech-impaired children.

Potential Users: Special education administrators, speech therapists

Population Affected: Speech handicapped children

Special Requirements: The aide should be closely supervised.

Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements: Cost of full-time aide

Limitations: The aide has received no formal training in speech therapy. Although the aide repeats lesson plans and addresses student needs, the services of a full-time certified speech therapist are essential for the operation of the program.

Title: Utilization of a University Consultant in a District with Limited Staff Resources

Contact:

Strategy Setting: East-central Nevada; high plateau and mountainous terrain; sparse population
Occupations: Mining and ranching; depressed economy
Major ethnic groups: Caucasian, Chicano, and Native American
Total number special education students: 350 (including speech handicapped)
Total number special education staff: 11

Problem: A problem in rural isolated school districts is the efficient delivery of special education services to handicapped children when staff resources and expertise are limited. In addition, it is difficult to share resources or information with other districts when a district covers a vast geographic area. This is particularly true with innovative practices and difficult problems or cases.

Strategy Description: This problem was ameliorated by contracting with a professor from the University of Oregon who serves as the district's consulting psychologist. The consultant helped to develop a diagnostic prescriptive program for the delivery of special education services. He developed specific testing and remediation procedures for cognitive/intellectual deficiencies which are foundations for the reading process. The consultant trained the special education teachers in the use of the diagnostic prescriptive program. This included the utilization of a booklet of remedial activities developed by the consultant.

The consultant was instrumental in writing a state grant for PL 94-142 funds to obtain a computer to maintain records and analyze specific student deficits and total curriculum weaknesses (diagnostic prescriptive data). The computer takes input from diagnostic data and IEP planning committee recommendations and prints an IEP for the individual student.

The consultant conducts psychological testing in the district and attends IEP meetings for the most difficult cases. He is flown in for approximately one week each month. The consultant appears to have been effective in establishing innovative programs and obtaining new resources. Additional evidence of effectiveness is suggested by the fact that the consultant continues to be utilized. No formal method for determining effectiveness has been done.

**Potential Users:** Total school staff

**Population Affected:** All educational personnel and students

**Special Requirements:** Access is needed to qualified individuals to serve as consultants and funding for such personnel.

**Cost Analysis/Funding Requirements:** The consultant costs are approximately $1,100.00 per month (5 working days), including transportation.

**Limitations:** Although it is very isolated, this district does have air service to facilitate securing a consultant. Other districts may have difficulties in attracting, funding, and transporting qualified consultants.